

Empowering People - Revitalizing the Vision
August 18 and 19, 2003
Laurentian Lodge, Elliot Lake

I have been thinking for some time now what message I might leave with you today. More importantly what message you would like to be left with.

In preparation I have reviewed previous speeches I have delivered over the years. I have reread many articles and books on education to try to get a focus. I have asked for advice from several individuals including some present here today. I have even reflected on my 33 years in education as a teacher. Department Head, vice principal, principal and Superintendent.

In that preparation, I have reconfirmed how fortunate I am to have chosen a career in education and now how very fortunate I am to be entrusted with the responsibility of Director at this particular time in my career. I have been provided with many wonderful opportunities and am very thankful and appreciative of the many people who have helped me, who have coached, mentored and picked me up along the way. I am indebted to the thousands of students who I had the privilege to come in contact with and who truly shaped my thinking about the very important work we do.

Overhead I am an Educator

By the way, without reservation, and to this point, my most memorable and enjoyable time as educator has been the time I spent as a Principal. In my view there is no better job in the entire education system. No one can have the impact on staff and students more than the principal. No one comes in contact with more students; more parents more staff more community people

than the principal. The principal is the key and everything that goes on in a school is a reflection of the Principal. For me it has been the most satisfying job in education.

And so as I look back I am very satisfied and thankful for my career. I enjoy coming to work every single day. I try to show my satisfaction and appreciation by my attitude, my work ethic, my loyalty and my commitment to improving learning for students.

As the new director I want to continue with the same approach and the same manner that I taken in my many previous positions of responsibility. There is no new agenda. There is no baggage, nothing new to prove to myself or others. I feel very comfortable to take on the responsibilities of Director. While there are challenges I am very optimistic about the possibilities. I feel very good about the role and I am looking forward to working with you.

We have great people in the organization, we have great leaders in you, we have great programs and we have many accomplishments which to be proud. And I also believe that we have reached a point in our development where we are ready for a renewal because we are positioned for even greater improvements, achievements and accomplishments.

I need your help and your leadership to help us turn the page. We can take our Board from a very good Board to an even greater Board We can continue to work to create an environment where students are able to learn to the best of their ability So that when they are judged by what ever standards anyone wishes to use, our students will out perform their peers

We can make it happen. Yes we can. Yes we can.

My message today will be based on my good feelings about our system and the people in it, and some of the things that I have observed and learned over the years and I hope that this will encourage discussion about what we can do as a team to become even more successful.

My message in a nutshell is that I would like to see everyone in our organization from the couriers, care staff, support staff, teachers, managers, principals, superintendents, director to trustees understand that we have an important role in our system.

Overhead what you do matters etc.

That what we do matters. That we all support the general direction and that we are making a difference in the education of our students. That we are empowered to make that happen.

In discussing this possible theme with the organizing committee for this Planning session, I think it was Pam Cooper that coined the title for our session to be

EMPOWERING PEOPLE – REVITALISING THE VISION

It was Andre that suggested that perhaps I could start the session by sharing some of my thoughts that might initiate some meaningful discussions over the next couple of days and in the months to come.

I would like to begin with my understanding of some key words.

Overhead cartoon on empowerment

Empowering people. What do we mean by empowering and which people are to be empowered.

Revitalizing the vision. What do we mean by Vision, What is the difference between Vision. Mission. Values and beliefs.

Overhead Did You Know & Helen Keller

You know

At One time if a person went around and spouted that he/she had a vision he/she would be put away. Today you can't get an interview without a vision.

A reporter asked Helen Keller "Is there anything worse than being blind?" "Oh yes", she replied. " Having sight but no vision".

EMPOWERMENT

Overhead empowerment

Definition: *Responsibility with accountability*

Sharing Responsibility is sharing decision-making with individuals and groups so that they have a deep sense of commitment and ownership. It includes intent to foster the long-term learning or development of others.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing on the skills, ideas and viewpoints of other team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let everyone do their own thing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively seeking input before making far reaching decisions or changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We do things your way. But when your input is not followed a reason is provided

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking about team members in positive terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making negative comments about other team members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seeking out work opportunities that will challenge your team and will enable them to grow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning work that you know the person will do well and efficiently because they have done similar assignments many times before
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing team members to take calculated risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do your own thing without proper information and consideration or without checking with others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and encouraging team members; reassuring them after a setback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in win-lose competition with other members of the team or telling other people what could have been done differently but not the employee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letting others lead and make honest mistakes in a non critical setting; trusting their judgment and showing respect for their intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling everything; second guessing your team all the time

Empowerment

Sharing Accountability is sharing responsibility for the outcome.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making decisions based on Board Policies, Procedures and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making decisions in isolation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting the team decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blaming others for why things are done a particular way
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being able to explain rationale for decisions to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referring questions to others on the team
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being an extension of the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rallying support for your particular cause through others
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding win-win solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Things are done your way and if others don't agree tell them to call a superintendent

Overhead Power of Vision

Revitalizing the vision. What do we mean by Vision, What is the difference between Vision. Mission. Values and beliefs.

Overhead Mission, Vision, Values

Review ADSB Mission, Vision, Values and Beliefs and maybe goals.

Overhead ADSB Mission and Vision

Review Ministry's Mission, Vision Values and Beliefs

Overhead Ministry Mission and Vision

What are the Mission Vision, Values and beliefs of your school community?

What is your vision of the Board and your school?

Insert my vision of the Board my vision of schools, my vision of students. Teachers, staff, principals, parents. Community and Trustees

Leadership and vision

Overhead My Vision

My Vision

I see our Board to be more open, collaborative, cooperative, collegial, entrepreneurial, service oriented, public relations oriented, and responsive to community concerns and needs.

A Board that is viewed by those within the system and outside the system as a Learning community.

Where people enjoy working together and learning together to achieve the results they desire

An organization that continues to provide excellent learning opportunities and where the standards are high for students and staff

A Board that promotes a culture where innovation and creativity are welcomed and people are encouraged to express their opinions

Where employees are encouraged to think outside the traditional practices, to experiment and recommend novel approaches

An organization that reaches out to the community and the community responds in kind to create partnerships for the improvement of student learning.

A system where we respect, value, nurture and care for each other.

A system where we work co-operatively to achieve common goals and are committed to our mission and value statements

Where we take pride in what we do and acknowledge and celebrate our accomplishments

My vision has our Board as the Board of choice in all our communities known for its superior student learning, effective practices, caring and involved staff.

More specifically what is your vision of an effective school?

Overhead An Effective School is one where...

An Effective school is one where the core of its existence is the improvement of student learning

Overhead Great hopes

Thomas Fuller wrote, “ Great hopes make great people” and believe it is critically important for our young people that our schools are a place for hope for the future

There are several models for effective schools. Not long ago Carole introduced this model and provided each of us with a copy

All good models have the student at the center

Overhead effective schools

Describe effective Planning and leadership practices
Effective school Climate
Effective Instructional Program

First we have effective school processes

A defined curricular and co-curricular program

Opportunities for student participation with responsibility and accountability

Understand and support our vision, mission and goals, which are monitored, celebrated and rewarded

High level of parental and community involvement

Second we have effective classroom processes

Highly motivated and qualified teaching and support staff

Good management of classroom procedures and student behavior

Meaningful direct instruction
Planned relevant activities
Clear assessment, evaluation and reporting practices
Counseling and assistance for students readily available

Third we have Effective school Administrative leadership

Empowered leaders
Implementation and promotion of effective school procedures, values and beliefs
Provision of instructional supervision and evaluation
Provision of an organized, orderly and safe work environment
Shared decision making
Provision of adequate resources
Fostering positive partnerships with parents and the community
Celebrating and communicating successes

Four we have Effective school beliefs

Belief that all students can and will succeed
Student believe that their efforts will lead to success

To me an indicator of how well we are doing as a system or school is what everyone says about us.

I would like to hear from students parents and members of the community:

That the teachers, principal, support staff are supportive, understanding, caring and fair to everyone

That our schools are providing learning that is meaningful and relevant

That we are preparing students to achieve to the very best of their abilities and that we are preparing them to eventually to get a good job and become a responsible citizen.

That they have good opportunities to be involved in extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs and artistic productions

That they are treated as individuals and that their individual needs are being met

I would like to hear from our graduates that their time in our schools was memorable and an enjoyable learning experience

Specifically at the Elementary level

I would like to hear:

That they satisfied with school

They like school

Learning is fun

Proud to be a member of that school

That they are getting a good education

Happy how they are doing

Feel good about what they are learning

That they find school is useful

It is interesting

They are learning what they need to Know

That they identify with the school

Learning to get along with others

They like the people in this school

They feel important

Teachers ask me to do a lot of things

That they have a good perception of teachers

I like my teachers

Teachers help me do my best
That they feel Safe and Secure
I feel very safe in school
There is always someone around to help

At the secondary level

That school has helped them develop good academic skills and knowledge

That school has helped develop personal qualities and leadership skills through their studies and involvement in school life

That they have developed an awareness, understanding and appreciation of social issues

That their learning experience has prepared them for their next step in life whether it be College, University or the world of work

In other words I would like to hear students validate that as a Board we are delivering on our Vision, Mission and Value Statement.

Overhead Methods

And we should be open and in fact actively seek out validation of how we are doing through such avenues as:

- Surveys
- Meeting with stakeholders individually or in groups
- Open houses and neighbourhood forums
- Using our Web page to solicit comments and opinions
- Chat line
- Informal discussion at community events, school plays, concerts and sporting events

We have started to draft our own GAP (Growth Assessment Profile)

The Ministry has mandated that every three years each school carry out A Program effectiveness Survey for grades 7-12 to measure how successful our board is implementing the changes in education and how well the needs of students are being met.

As part of the teacher appraisal each year each school has to carry out a student and Parent Survey on how well teachers are communicating with the student and the home

We expect that the administrator's appraisal model that should be coming out this year will also be a tool that will be providing with student and parental input.

We can get all the input and feedback we want if we are receptive to it.

I heard it said that schools are about widening the circle of hope and opportunity and about being the dream catcher for our children's future.

Overhead Be A Dream Catcher

We should never lose sight of the fact that the child as a learner is not only the center of the school system but the only reason for its existence and we must always be open to input.

Leadership Style

Overhead Oh! What a gift

Oh! What a gift and power we would have if we could see ourselves as others see us.

Bernard Shaw

What type of leadership Style is required to make this vision a reality.

Overhead Leadership style

Integrity

We have to know what we stand for we have to walk the talk every single day

Courage

To be able to deal with crisis management

Must be able to bring issues to a resolution hopefully a win win solution

Must be prepared to stand up and support team decisions in any situation even if sometime it is an unpopular perspective or is a decision we do not support.

Stamina

Must have physical and emotional stamina

Must have a balanced life

We have to really enjoy the work and the every day challenges we have to get a kick out trying to resolve problems when it appears that there is no immediate solution

Good Judgment

Must be able to look at the total picture of all issues

Decision must be based on common sense

Spiritual life

Not to be confused necessarily with a religious life

This is a reflective practice

Be able to look at what we are doing and why we are doing it

This is the inner voice that keeps us on the right track

Visionary

Must have clear vision and conviction

Encompass a total view of the world

Decisive without conflict

Self-Confident with a sense of importance about education

Must feel strongly about the importance of what we do

Provider

Must be aware of the tools needed to accomplish the work

Provide the resources needed

People oriented

Must be an encourager an enabler

Must bring out the best ideas

Must be able to encourage initiative in others

Service oriented

We are in the business of providing the best educational environment

We have to be responsive to the needs of others

We are either serving students or serving those who are serving students

A messenger and a cheerleader

Must be able to speak the good news

Must keep everyone informed

Must be motivational, positive and upbeat

Optional Overheads Wanted, Ten Commandments, Exemplary leaders

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES THAT WE WILL BE FACING TOGETHER

Some of these issues are: declining enrolments, school capacity, aging facilities, funding shortage, equity of programs in our communities, rigorous curriculum demands for our students, increased demands for special needs students, public accountability, staff morale and buy-in, succession planning, public relations perceptions and governance concerns.

These issues can be viewed in many ways and at times appear to be overwhelming. I prefer to see them as opportunities for change, growth and progress. As director, I look forward to working with you to further our progress and accomplishments and help us turn the page from where we have been to where we are going.

Facility Study

I believe that the impetus for an accommodation review has to be how can we provide the best affordable learning environment for our students. Based on data driven information.

It should not be based on the glass half empty or half full philosophy nor should it be based on public perception or individual perception

I support the process that has already been initiated that will provide a profile for all our buildings and that will provide the information for all of us to make informed decisions.

Concurrently our plant people are carrying out comprehensive report for the ministry on the physical condition of our school that

may result in facility improvements funds. So we want to make sure that we get our fair share this funding.

We need to develop options for the consolidation of our schools and programs and we need to carry out proper consultation. All options have to be open for discussion. Options could include a wide spectrum from closing elementary and/or secondary schools to establishing Jk to 12 schools, 7-12 schools, and middle schools and. even closing some neighborhood schools and then building a new school. We can also examine specialty schools or focus schools.

Whatever the Board decides, in most of our communities, parents have options where they send their children to school and we need to remember that we are in competition for students and whatever we do we have to remain the system of choice.

As far as this year goes, realistically if the Board is looking a school closure and it is looking to start the process after the November election because there may be new trustees elected, my sense is that if there is going to be any closures and we start the process in the new year we only have time to study some elementary schools. In my view, operationally it would be difficult to close a secondary school from January to June.

My sense is that the future direction we take should be based on the school profile information, the ministry appraisal of our existing buildings, the input we receive on available options and our financial position but in the end Trustees will make these decision.

Succession Planning:

We are doing a fair job at succession planning but we need to improve our efforts so that we can continue to provide top-notch leaders. The board needs a talent pool of leaders to take on

leadership positions that will come open because of retirements, promotions, and resignations. We look to some of you to step up to the next leadership position and we look to all of you to mentor and encourage future leaders.

Strategies

Continue our leadership development program

Set up mentorship programs

Provide job-shadowing programs

Second into short-term administrative assignments

Provide professional development opportunities

Restructuring Admin council

Boards of our size can operate with one director, one supt of business and three academic superintendents. I favour the model that has a superintendent for elementary program and organization and a superintendent of secondary program and organization and one superintendent for special education and Board services.

That is where we will end up in the near future. But for the short term, we are asking the board to let us advertise for a superintendent on a one-year basis to backfill in the secondary superintendent position now vacant.

We believe that the Board will support this request with the understanding that we will move to the reduced model as soon as possible. We are hoping that this will happen as soon as possible and no later than the end of September.

Should the Board not be supportive we would have to consider an interim model.

We may have to discuss with you downloading more responsibility to principals and managers to redistribute some of the workload.

In any case our succession planning from managers vice-principal, principal, superintendent, director has to provide a seamless transition so that the expertise of the leadership team is maintained at the level that serves the need of our Board best.

Budget Planning and Reporting

We intend to review with the leadership of the Supt of business the whole planning and reporting procedures

We would like the review with the Board and get input from you how the process can be improved to make it more meaningful for the trustee and other stakeholders.

Internal and external relations

Our image is only as good as what others say about us. Especially what our staff says

That is why at new employee orientation meetings I always encourage new hires to be our ambassadors because our public will gage us with how our own staff represents us.

I remind them of the commercial that say, "If they like what you see, tell others and if they don't, tell us.

As administration we need to be more visible and more accessible

We would like to reduce the number of meetings and free us up to spend more time in schools supporting principals and staff, We should be with our front line people to let them know that we support them. That we know what they are doing and while we want them to always give us their very best that if there are problems, we are there to assist them. We want to hear their concerns and their ideas on how to improve things.

External Relations

Raising the visibility and credibility of Algoma

What can be done?

Aggressive Advertising campaign with a pre planned a marketing plan

Information booth at different venues

Board Flag

Board Banner

Using retired teachers as ambassadors

Profile a day in the life of a teacher, a student, the chair, a trustee, a superintendent, and director

Ecumenical celebration to highlight our different faiths and tolerance for diversity

Host workshops for the public interest

Use cable TV more

Advertise on mugs, pens, polo shirts, and jackets

Provide media training for principals and administrators

Use staff as guest speakers in the community

Improve our web site

Send out newsletters. Flyers

Set up pr committee

Personally

I have already begun meeting with the chair of the Board and with individual trustees to hear their expectations, viewpoint and concerns. I am listening to what they feel is important and what they see as priorities.

I have met with the managers and will continue meeting with you individually and in groups. I will try to visit as many schools as possible visiting with teachers and other support staff, secretaries EA and care staff and school councils and student leaders as many as possible. I want to discuss our vision and importantly hear from them.

I plan on reaching out to community groups and will want to speak to the Mayors, Reeves and CAO's from our communities establishing supportive networks and establishing communication networks

I will be meeting with the Unions and Federations and set up regular meetings to improve lines of communication

I will want to establish lines of communication with our local politicians and Ministry personnel and the Media

Overhead Queen Elizabeth

There is a Quote that is attributed to

Queen Elizabeth 11 during her tour of West Germany in 1965 urged this course of advise when she said

For 50 years we heard too much about the things that divided us. Let us now make great effort to remember the things, which unite

us. With these links we can forge a new and better understanding in the future

Overhead What role are you playing

We can all play a very crucial role in improving internal and external relations and communication. What role are you playing? What role can you be playing?

SUMMARY

Overhead Henry Ford

When reviewing successful organizations I am reminded of Henry Ford who said:

People coming together is a beginning. People keeping together is Progress. People working and learning together is success.

Overhead leadership

When reviewing successful leaders, one quality that they have in common is the capacity to lead by example and to use their strengths to bring out the best in others. In the book *Passion for Excellence*, Tom Peter's states, **"leadership is about emotion. It is about listening, caring, trusting. It is about creating a vision that is exciting . . . creating zest and passion in the workplace. Leadership is about making a shared vision a reality."**

I would like to thank all of you for your attention this morning. I truly believe that we are positioned very well to make great strides and provide an exciting education system for our students.

We have the vision, knowledge experience, skills, attitude, commitment, energy and the track record to make that happen

I believe we all want the very best education system in northern Ontario if not all of Ontario,

Our Trustees want that.
Our community wants that.
Our parents want that.
And our students deserve no less.

We can do it.

YES WE CAN.

That is a lot of rambling by me with you listening. I wonder if it would be an idea now for you discuss at your tables what your thoughts are on issues, practices areas of concern that ma have come to mind that you feel we should be addressing immediately or over the year.

We could take ---- minutes and have one from each table report your ideas.

Or you could look at our practices from the view of stop, start, continue and report that.

Or if there is a response that someone wants to put forth now we could entertain that also.

Thank-you

Follow up

Overhead The Natural Way Or The Miraculous Way

Overhead The Miraculous Way